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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Fourth Committee (A/45/685 and Corr.1)]

45/25. Question of the British Virgin Islands

The General Assembly,

Having considered the question of the British Virgin Islands,

Having examined the relevant chapters of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 1/

Recalling its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and all resolutions and decisions of the United Nations relating to the British Virgin Islands, including in particular General Assembly resolution 44/95 of 11 December 1989,

Conscious of the need to ensure the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration in respect of the Territory,

Having heard the statement of the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as the administering Power, 2/

1/ A/45/23 (Part III), chap. IV; and A/45/23 (Part VI) and (Part VI)/Corr.1, chap. IX.

2/ See A/C.4/45/SR.12.

Bearing in mind the stated policy of the Government of the United Kingdom, the administering Power, that it remains ready to respond positively to the express wish of the people of the Territory on the question of independence, 3/

Bearing in mind also the announcement of 22 December 1987 by the territorial Government that it would introduce legislation to revise the electoral laws of the Territory to provide for continuous voter registration,

Aware of the special circumstances of the geographical location and economic conditions of the Territory, and bearing in mind the necessity of diversifying and strengthening further its economy as a matter of priority in order to promote economic stability,

Expressing its concern over the continued illegal operations of foreign fishermen, and stressing that this uncontrolled exploitation could deplete current fish stocks and adversely affect future yields,

Noting that expatriates still account for a large share of the employed labour force and that there is a critical need for the training of nationals in the technical, vocational, managerial and professional fields, and welcoming the establishment of the British Virgin Islands College, which would meet the needs of the public and private sectors of the Territory,

Noting with concern the vulnerability of the Territory to drug trafficking and related activities,

Welcoming the contribution to the development of the Territory by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, as well as by regional organizations,

Noting the continued participation of the Territory in regional and other international organizations,

Noting also the severe effects of hurricane Hugo on the Territory's economy, particularly on its infrastructure and on its agriculture and tourism sectors, as well as the adverse consequences of the hurricane on the Government's economic diversification efforts,

Recalling the dispatch in 1976 of a United Nations visiting mission to the Territory,

Mindful that United Nations visiting missions provide an effective means of assessing the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and considering that the possibility of sending a further visiting mission to the British Virgin Islands at an appropriate time should be kept under review,

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3/ A/AC.109/944 and Corr.1, para. 17.

1. Approves the section of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the British Virgin Islands; 4/

2. Reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of the British Virgin Islands to self-determination and independence in conformity with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

3. Reiterates the view that such factors as territorial size, geographical location, size of population and limited natural resources should in no way delay the speedy exercise by the people of the Territory of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in conformity with the Declaration, which fully applies to the British Virgin Islands;

4. Reiterates that it is the responsibility of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as the administering Power, to create such conditions in the Territory as will enable the people of the British Virgin Islands to exercise freely and without interference their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV) and all other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

5. Reaffirms that it is ultimately for the people of the British Virgin Islands themselves to determine freely their future political status in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration, and in that connection reaffirms the importance of fostering an awareness among the people of the Territory of the possibilities open to them in the exercise of their right to self-determination;

6. Reaffirms the responsibility of the administering Power to promote the economic and social development of the Territory, and calls upon the administering Power to intensify its efforts, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to broaden the economic base of the Territory through diversification and to continue to increase its assistance to the Territory in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the economy;

7. Urges the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to take effective measures to safeguard and guarantee the inalienable right of the people of the British Virgin Islands to own and dispose of the natural resources of the Territory, including marine resources, and to establish and maintain control over the future development of those resources;

8. Reiterates its call upon the administering Power, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to facilitate the adoption of a human resources training programme in order to expand the participation of the local population in the decision-making process in all sectors and to fill managerial and technical positions with local persons;

4/ A/45/23 (Part VI) and (Part VI)/Corr.1, chap. IX, sect. B.7.

9. Calls upon the administering Power to continue to take all necessary measures, in co-operation with the territorial Government, to counter problems related to drug trafficking;

10. Reiterates its appeal to the administering Power to continue to facilitate the participation of the British Virgin Islands in various international and regional organizations and in organizations of the United Nations system;

11. Invites the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the regional organizations concerned, to intensify measures to accelerate progress in the social and economic development of the Territory;

12. Urges Member States and specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to extend all possible assistance with a view to rehabilitating and reconstructing the Territory, which was devastated by hurricane Hugo;

13. Requests the Special Committee to continue the examination of this question at its next session, including the possible dispatch of a further visiting mission to the British Virgin Islands at an appropriate time and in consultation with the administering Power, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

44th plenary meeting
20 November 1990